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ABSTRACT

Jurgen Habermas's theory of communicative action has held much promise for critical theory and its examination of the structure of society. This theory, however, has been accused by some as being limited in regard to other forms of discourse, especially fictional, mythical, and religious texts. Habermas has argued that literature (i.e., fictive narrative) is fundamentally different from scientific and philosophical texts. For him, the intersubjective "force" of the communicative acts committed within the fictional narrative remain binding only within its borders--the reader is not obligated to take a position on the validity claims being advanced within the story. This paper focuses on Habermas's thought on narrative discourse in general, arguing that his analysis of its argumentative power is too limited. Drawing on insights within Paul Ricoeur's notion of the world-projection that texts open the auditor to, the paper first notes how narratives can place the reader in a novel's lifeworld, thus forcing certain claims about this possible world and its composition onto the reader's judgmental shoulders. Insights from Walter Fisher's theory of narrative are then used to expand Habermas's notion of literary argument, illustrating that the audience is aptly interested in evaluating the values and motives for action and belief that the narrative offers. (Includes 34 notes.) (NKA)

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Critical Theory & Textual Arguments: Expanding Habermas's Analysis of Literary Claims

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Introduction

Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action has held much promise for critical theory and its examination of the structure of society. This theory, however, has been accused by some as being limited in regard to other forms of discourse, especially fictional, mythical, and religious texts.[1] This paper will focus on Habermas's thought on narrative discourse in general, arguing that his analysis of its argumentative power is too limited. In his essay "Philosophy and Science as Literature?",[2] Habermas argues that literature (i.e., fictive narrative) is fundamentally different from scientific and philosophical texts. After examining the attempt of Italo Calvino's novel, *If on a winter's night a traveler*,[3] to deconstruct the boundaries between the fictional novel and the reader's world, Habermas concludes that fictional works cannot refer to the "real" world as scientific and philosophical texts do—they do not advance claims that help the reader solve problems, or that require judgment on their validity in terms of real social relations, observations about the physical world, or in reference to the expressive truth of the author. In other words, the intersubjective "force" of the communicative acts committed within the fictional narrative remain binding only within its borders; the reader is not obligated to take a position on the validity claims being advanced within the story.

This paper argues that such narratives can and do argue, and that the reader must take some position on the validity claims being advanced. Drawing on insights within Paul Ricoeur's notion of the world-projection that texts open the auditor to, this inquiry will first note how narratives can place the reader in a novel's lifeworld, thus forcing certain claims about this possible world and its composition onto the reader's judgmental shoulders. The reader must understand this projected world, and in doing so notice how it is distanced from their own lifeworld—the text makes claims about the world, social relations, and expressiveness, but in reference to this slightly different "alternate" world that is projected in front of the text. Ricoeur finds that this opens the way to combine hermeneutic inquiry with ideological critique and critical theory.[4] Insights from Walter Fisher's[5] theory of narrative are then used to expand Habermas's notion of literary argument, illustrating that the audience is aptly interested in evaluating the values and motives for action and belief that the narrative offers.

Through the insights of Ricoeur and Fisher, one can appreciate the differences Habermas notes between scientific/philosophical texts and fiction texts; however, one can also delineate the role that fictional narratives play in critical theory through their proffering of possible worlds that disclose good reasons for certain beliefs and actions to the reader. Narratives can and do make claims, not only about the world as it is, but as it could be—it is this insight that helps expand Habermas's analysis of texts and their relation to his theory of communicative action.

Habermas on Literary Claims

Habermas has not thoroughly written on the notion of textual arguments, since his theory of communicative action largely addresses pragmatic problem solving situations in actual discourse. One important place he does comment on the relation between philosophy/science and fictional literature is in his essay "Philosophy and Science as Literature?" In this work, Habermas deals with the important differences between

literary texts and philosophical/scientific texts, largely spurred on by a conflation of argumentative discourse with fictional/imaginative discourse. To save the pragmatically oriented notion of philosophical and scientific discourse, Habermas apparently finds it necessary to highlight what literary texts cannot do—that is, make and advance validity claims about the "real" world. He seems to agree with the notion of "world-disclosing" that texts offer, but resists the common desire among post-structuralists to "*overdraw* this aesthetic experience, to totalize the contact with the extra-ordinary, to absorb the everyday."[6] What is "everyday," of course, is the linguistic capability to advance claims that help solve problems involving real action, real belief, etc. Fiction deals with other, imaginatively constructed worlds, but not with this one that we directly live and act within. Literary texts are seen as not documenting actual events or claims about the world as it is, but instead they call upon the reader to suspend disbelief and to "follow the narrated events *as if* they *were* real."[7] If the novel is constructed such that this "willing disbelief" cannot be entertained, then it has failed in its role as fiction—the reader cannot imagine a different world and cannot see the story "as if" it was real. Thus, the telos of the fictional narrative is to be different from the world as it is experienced and to not make claims about it; otherwise, Habermas finds that this use of language would be a scientific/philosophical treatise on the reader's world, and as such, would offer validity claims about it that are to answered with assent or dissent.

Habermas is interested in Calvino's project simply because it attempts to collapse the world of the real into the world of the text. In order for such a project to be successful, Habermas delineates the world-relations and world intersections for which it must account.[8] This paper, unlike Calvino's novel, is not interested in claiming that all experience and argumentative discourse is "captured" within the text; thus, the attacks on all that literary narratives must subsume are not relevant to this enterprise. What is important is Habermas's analysis of the fundamental differences between literary texts and argumentative texts (such as philosophical and scientific writings). Two aspects of the literary text are produced which supposedly limits its ability to argue—the role of the reader and the illocutionary disempowerment of validity claims in these texts.

Habermas discusses Calvino's attempt to make a fictional work self-reflexive by drawing the reader into the story itself. Such an action is doomed to fail according to Habermas because it fails to account for the role of the reader in fictional narratives. First, it must be noted that fictional texts always "push" against something external to the work itself.[9] This is the objective world that the text attempts to mimic to enact the putative state of disbelief on the part of the reader. The reader does notice the separation between the text and the external world of action and interaction. Additionally, to assume such primacy to the text would be to require that the text tightly steer the ontological expectations of the author *and* the reader; while the author is closely connected to the work, the reader varies immensely—as Habermas notes, different readers from different cultural settings in different eras will react to a work differently.[10] Even within the story, the reader qua implied listener or implied audience does not exhaust the identity or reality of the actual reader—they are still a real person with relationships and identity beliefs outside of their written role in the fictional text. It is in this capacity that Habermas finds them being "untouched" by validity claims outside the story—if validity claims are directed at them, it has to be within the fictional story as

narratorial commentary to the implied reader, not as claims made to an actual reader in whatever context he or she may inhabit.

The reader's relation to the fictional narrative is related to a more primary concern Habermas has in regard to literary texts—unlike scientific and philosophical texts, any type of validity claim within them is *illocutionarily disempowered*. Whereas scientific and philosophical texts (argumentative texts in general) have porous borders that allow validity claims to directly affect listeners, literary texts hold validity claims that are valid only for those *within* the world of the novel (i.e., the characters). This epitomizes the distinction between validity and meaning for Habermas, of which the former requires intersubjective assent or dissent from discursive parties. The latter merely requires that the reader understand what the text is describing, discussing, etc. to be felicitous—it does not address statements to the reader that purport to be valid descriptions of the world. Any claims the literary text advances do not have illocutionary forces, i.e., they do not force the reader to assent or dissent to them as valid descriptions of the external world, the social world of norms, or the truthfulness of the speaker.[11]

Communicative action in the "real world" is oriented toward coping with situations and solving problems; the way it accomplishes this task is through cooperative understanding brought on by the illocutionary force of claims on interactants in discourse.[12] In contrast to this, the fictional text is designed to remove the "burden" of action that faces the reader in real life communicative situations—the "problems he [sic] faces are not immediately his own."[13] Claims that are made about the world within a literary narrative, according to Habermas, are illocutionarily disempowered; the "internal relation between the meaning and the validity of what is said survives intact only for the characters in the novel . . . but not for the real readers."[14] Readers are not forced to take a position on claims within the text, but must do so when partaking in scientific and philosophical works. With such an analysis of literary texts, Habermas finds that he has demonstrated a fundamental difference between fictional narratives and argumentative discourse—the latter always forces the reader/participant to take a position, whereas the former distances itself from issues of validity and the "real world."

Literary Narratives and World Projection

This analysis of literary narratives as lacking any type of illocutionary power seems to be uncertain. Indeed, one can find resources within the thought of Paul Ricoeur to combat such a notion—as many partakers of literary texts have always known, there is some type of claim that is advanced about how the world or action could be via fictional discourse. It is argued here that one important way a text can advance claims about the world and how it could be (through action/inaction) is by opening up a "possible world," which the reader in turn has to compare to his or her own world and judge its acceptability accordingly. In this light, literary texts can criticize the existing state of affairs and offer new visions of what a better "world" (i.e. social arrangements, etc.) would be like.

Ricoeur beings with the text being distanced from its original authorial context, which leads interpretation toward the "world of the text."[15] The text (literary narrative) has a *sense* and a *reference*—the latter is lost once it is distanced from its author and his/her time period, thus rendering the content of a text as its "proposed world" resident within its boundaries. Instead of directly referring to reality, as occurs in ordinary discourse, Ricoeur finds that the value of literary texts is the possibility for second order

reference, "which reaches the world not only at the level of manipulable objects, but at the level [of] . . . *Lebenswelt* [life-world] and . . . "being-in-the-world."[16] Unlike scientific texts, which refer to objects and their interaction, such literary narratives "refer" to the horizons of a new possible mode of being or existence. Thus, a text can show one a world that they can see themselves as existing in—Ricoeur labels this as the "proposed world" unique to a given text. Instead of referring to the world as it is, such texts can project a world that the reader *can only interpret as a possible way the world can be*.

In this light, one can argue that Habermas's concern for the split between argumentative texts and literary narratives is upheld, but not to the detriment of the latter. Scientific and philosophical discourses use argument and validity claims that are closely tied to the world we exist in—for instance, they involve actual issues, are directed to the reader qua real person, etc. Such claims can be valid in the sense that they refer to the world and are open to intersubjective confirmation or denial. Literary texts, however, have a second-order reference that is not so closely tied to the world as it is experienced. Characters, situations, times, and climes far removed or fake are all employed to distance the narrative from the reader's actual world (and objects therein), and in doing so, project a world of new possibilities unique to that text. This proposed world, unique to the text it is couched in, is advanced to the reader as a description of new possibilities. The reader does not accept or reject this based upon its correspondence to the world as experienced. Instead, the reader is presented a world that must be appropriated (*Aneigung*), or made understandable/relevant to their present situation. As Ricoeur notes, if one understands a text, it is because they "*understand oneself in front of the text*."[17] The reader sees him or herself as in the proposed world that unfolds in front of the text; thus, the text not only advances a claim about possibility, but that claim necessarily must allow for the possibilities to be relevant to the actual reader.[18] The reader receives an idea of a new way of existing, a way that is already distinct from the way they actually exist (i.e., distinct from their world).

It is at this point that the claim to how the world and existence can be is open to acceptance or rejection by the reader. A claim is being advanced concerning a novel way of being, and the reader can accept this as a way they want to be (i.e., more desirable than their current state of being), or reject is as inferior to their current state of being. Even if the reader holds off judgment, the illocutionary power of the text still remains—it still opens the reader to a new version of the world and their being that they can actively agree with (act to reach) or reject (act to avoid). Just as a participant in an interaction in the "real world" can ignore full participation in communicative action, so can a reader leave off judgment of the new states of being that have revealed to them by the text. The point is that the text optimally allows for the advancement of this claim and for the judgment/integration of it by the reader, just as discursive communicative action allows for the transferal and redeeming of validity claims (although this is not always guaranteed in practice).

Literary Narratives and Good Reasons

Narrative research has also benefited from individuals who have a forward-looking phenomenological approach to literary texts. For instance, one can adopt a purely structuralist account of narrative, and focus on events in "story" time manipulated in "discourse" time by the narrator, or one can take a more phenomenological focus and examine what the narrative means for the auditor (reader, etc.) in their life projects,

which have a "beginning" (past), a "middle" (present), and an "end" (future).[19] Walter Fisher provides one such account.[20] Fisher finds that all human communication is narrative in form, which simply means that humans evaluate it according to two standards—narrative probability and narrative fidelity. "Narrative probability" concerns the

> formal features of a story conceived as a discrete sequence of thoughts and/or action in life or literature (any written or recorded form of discourse); that is, it concerns whether a story coheres or "hangs together," whether or not a story is free of contradictions.[21]

"Narrative fidelity," the external criteria of audience judgment, "concern[s] the 'truth qualities' of a story, the degree to which it accords with the logic of good reasons: the soundness of its reasoning and the value of its values."[22] Thus, audiences ask "whether or not the stories they [the audience] experience ring true with the stories they know to be true in their lives."[23]

According to this view of narrative, the emphasis from the perspective of the individual partaking in the text is how it affects their projections of the future; these stories, treatises, arguments, etc. can all hold "good reasons" for action or belief. While this paper focuses on literary texts, all types of communication, according to Fisher, are similar in that auditors judge them according to internal coherence and consistency with held values/experiences to accept the warrants they contain for auditor action or belief in their future projects. Thus, a story may seem to be purely fictional, but a reader can see warrants for action and belief from the characters and situations *if they can identify with them*. Fisher argues that

> we *identify* with an account (and its author) or we treat it as mistaken. We identify with stories or accounts when we find that they offer "good reasons" for being accepted. . . . Reasons are good when they are perceived as (1) true to and consistent with what we think we know and what we value, (2) appropriate to whatever decision is pending, (3) promising in effects for ourselves and others, and (4) consistent with what we believe is an ideal basis for conduct.[24]

Fisher's insight here is useful in considering the power of literary texts. A text can argue or advance claims even if it is not directly addressing the reader. Thus, a fictional narrative is not *illocutionarily disempowered*, as Habermas finds it to be. By offering the reader accounts of desirable actions, beliefs, etc., the text offers the reader the chance to *identify* with them as being good reasons for him or her to change their actions/beliefs, or to keep acting in a certain way. This identification can occur if the claims advance in the narrative are perceived by the reader as relevant to their life and decisions therein; after this necessary condition for judgment, the reader will determine if the claim offers advantages to them and if it is consistent with their values and beliefs concerning this type of action. The claims advanced within a narrative and the accompanying details that surround their presentation can become good reasons to act or to believe based upon this voluntary identification by the reader—by seeing the ideas in the story and their applicability to their life and projects, the reader can identify with them and accept them as reasons for future belief or action.[25] Thus, in Plato's *Crito*, a reader may agree with views presented by "fictional" characters (Socrates and Crito in the dialogue)[26] that have illocutionary power to change the reader's view on cooperative action and communication; the reader does see the themes presented by these characters in this

narrative about Socrates' escaping from prison as possibly being applicable to their projects and beliefs. While modern philosophers are not likely to be confronted with the need and justification to escape from imprisonment culminating in a hemlock mocha, they can and do find value in this work beyond its literary charm—they often see the claim and elucidation of a dialogic approach to intersubjective truth in this work, even though it is fictional in presentation. It still presents claims about right action and about the nature of the world that the reader can identify with and use in adapting/adopting projects of action in their future.

Illocutionary Power and Narrative Claims

From the above considerations, this inquiry now proceeds to form a provisional model of the way that narratives can present claims that have illocutionary power and that lead to readers to the adoption of new ideas in concert with textual input. Taking the reader as a being that has a past, present, and future in their phenomenological consciousness,[27] one can catalogue the temporal divisions of how the text is appropriated by the reader. The projected world of the text relates to possible states of being, and the reader partaking in the text can see this world as relating to them in three ways—as being a projected world appropriated to relate to their past, to their present situation, and to their future projects and goals. If the reader cannot see such worlds unfolding from the text and cannot relate them to their situations, past through future, then one can claim that the reader does not truly understand the text. If they do see its world-projections and appropriates them, the text can advance claims about how their states of being in the past, present, or future could be different. These alterations can then be something pursued and desired or loathed and avoided.

Within these projected worlds that the reader relates to their past, present, or future, there exist claims about what one could be; these ontological scenarios "cash out" in terms of reasons for certain beliefs (about the world, people, etc.), certain actions (ethical justifications, warrants), and issues of value (what is "good" or "evil"). These subcomponents of the projected world that is opened up by the literary text are all things that can be identified with by the reader; they can see these as being beliefs, actions, etc. they should take or should avoid. Thus, two levels of identification open up in regard to the text—one can see him or herself as in the world of the text (the precondition to understanding a text) and can see him or herself as needing to adopt certain aspects of the text (finding "good reasons" in it for action or belief). The first type of identification merely places the reader into the world of the text, be it general anguish or be it 19th century Germany. Either way, ways of being are created and recreated through the reader's experience of the text, and the reader can judge the desirability of such modes of being accordingly. The second type of identification is more specific; it is through this active identification that the reader can adopt or reject certain beliefs, warrants for actions, etc. that are displayed by the story, its characters, etc. For instance, philosophers can grasp the general quandary of Socrates in the *Crito*, and are thus able to see the world the text opens to them; they can also identify with certain aspects of the story and its characters, and take away a new/changed understanding of how they are to act or believe in terms of reasoned belief, the permissibility of breaking unjust laws, etc.

An example of a literary narrative may be helpful at this part of the discussion. One can take a portion of Jayadeva's *Gītāgovinda*,[28] an ancient Hindu devotional poem about the amorous exploits of Krishna as a young man. While this text is not overtly

discussing the "real world," it has been used in religious ways that suggest it is metaphor for life or as a description of the divine Krishna's childhood. At any rate, it is a moving example of Sanskrit verse that can and does levy illocutionary claims on the classical and modern reader. Krishna, lamenting over his erotic love affair and separation with Rādhā, a married woman, sings the following song:

> Don't lift your [the love-god's] mango-blossom arrow!
> Don't aim your bow!
> Our games prove your triumph, Love.
> Striking weak victims is empty valor.
> Rādhā's doe eyes broke my heart
> With a volley of glances
> Impelled by love—
> Nothing can arouse me now!
>
> Her joyful responses to my touch,
> Trembling liquid movements of her eyes,
> Fragrance from her lotus mouth,
> A sweet ambiguous stream of words,
> Nectar from her red berry lips—
> Even when the sensuous objects are gone,
> My mind holds on to her in a trance.
> How does the wound of her desertion deepen?
>
> . . . .
>
> Her arched brow is his bow,
> Her darting glances are arrows,
> Her earlobe is the bowstring—
> Why are the weapons guarded
> In Love's living goddess of triumph?
> The world is already vanquished.[29]

While it may advance slightly different world projections to readers at different times, it is difficult to deny that this poem is advancing some type of illocutionary claim about how one could exist in the world, especially in relation to others. The reader is thrust into a world created by Krishna's sorrows that is saturated in love and desire for one's lost companion. One may see that this text (at least this part of it) is showing a reader this type of existence, so focused on the sensual contact with a significant other, that is defined by its warlike notions of love and overpowering emotions—perhaps one sees this projected idea of love as incarnate in the other and so incredibly powerful that it "slays" one's will to resist in one glance, one body, etc. One can either accept or reject this projected world as one that they would desire in the present or future; for instance, one longing for love may read such a text and find that this is the type of emotional storm they want to be swept away in. Conversely, one (perhaps an overly-devoted logician) may read this as overly emotional and careless in its universalization of certain feelings—a sickness of the soul that can be overcome with cool reasoning in the face of animalistic

passion. Either way, the projected world is forced upon the reader, who then must make some judgment about this second-order reference to a projected way of being.

One a more specific level, a reader can see in this text certain warrants for belief and action. For instance, in the section noted above, certain specific "reasons" are being advanced. The notion of the romantic other as physically entrancing and overpowering is invoked in the second paragraph, and with it the "physical" damage that separation effects. One can find this as cohering with their view of romantic phenomenon, or can see it as an untrue description. If it seems to go with one has experienced, it can be taken from the text as a reason for continued belief or novel belief about this aspect of the subject matter. For example, one can read this poem from ancient India and return to their twenty-first century home with a new understanding about love and it similarities to capture in warfare, all due to this encounter with the text and its illocutionary claims that one is faced with. One may see the theme of "love as war" as an apt metaphor, meaning that *it is seen as a useful guide to giving meaning to one's past relationships and possible future relational actions*. If one accepts this claim from the text of love "breaking one's heart" and the romantic other enshrining the warlike goddess of love, then one can take this warrant for belief and action outside of the text in the form of why they act in certain ways. If they reject it, they also constitutively engage the text and differ with it over the correct way to order social affairs (i.e., through their actions). Either way, a specific claim is being judged within the text by a reader based upon its resonance with their past experiences or future projects.

One may respond to all of this analysis by arguing that this is "interpretive guessing" spurred on by a fictional story; surely this must be clearly distinct from a text that refers directly to this world, such as a scientific or philosophical text. The lines, however, are seldom that clear. For instance, take the example of Dan Gayman, a religious leader in one area of the "Christian Identity" movement. This movement in general, and Gayman's Church of Israel in particular, promote a vile form of racism and anti-Semitism underwritten by radical readings of the biblical narrative.[30] For most "ordinary" readers, it is difficult to tell the storied, mythic elements of Gayman's work from the purely argumentative claims about the physical and social world we all share. For instance, he discusses the nature of the Bible and its relation to the "white" race in this following passage taken from a pamphlet entitled "The Holy Bible: The Book of Adam's Race."

> **That the Holy Bible is the Book of Adam's Race means that the White Race of Adam were made the custodians of the Sacred Scriptures.** The White Race was given the stewardship of Divine Truth. . . **It is the Book of the Race of Adam**. This Book does not belong to other races. Other races will receive their blessings through the race of Adam! Remember you are committing blasphemy when you seek to make God's Word more than it declares itself to be! Jesus Christ declared: "**Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you**." All missionary programs designed to take the White Man's Book and His Covenant Relationship to Jesus Christ to **non-white races** is blasphemy before Almighty God! Moreover, the record of history shows that Genesis 5:1-2 has been tested and proven by centuries of historical development. Christianity has been carried in the genes of the White Man![31]

What is particularly interesting about this vile twisting of biblical texts and traditions is the marriage between "fact" and "fiction"—Gayman combines biblical narratives (if not strictly "mythical," at least far-removed from present experience) and claims about the world today to provide powerful narratives that often lead followers to "live" them to their violent conclusions.[32] How these texts do this in spite of their incredible admixture of "fictional" elements (such as the metaphysical backdrop of God, races from other planets, etc.) is by involving the reader in the same process as a vivid fictional narrative—they expand the possible states of being the reader has or can experience, and they provide specific warrants for belief and action. Initially, such texts as the passage quoted above place the reader in a projected world that orients them through the biblical narrative (as interpreted by Gayman); the "white" reader is placed in a direct lineage from the heroes in the Bible, and can see how their life has meaning through being in this narrative.[33] This is one of the reasons such narratives can cause such a violent and powerful identification with "disenfranchised" groups—they offer a transcendental source of value, worth, and direction for future projects.[34] These works project a world of divine sanction and valuation, and provide a mission that guides one's future projects of salvation, valuation, etc. It is this projected world that is strongly rejected by most people, but unfortunately followed by some particularly hateful extremists. For instance, most people's first reaction to being exposed to the passage read above will be a powerful revulsion or rejection, both indicating that some sort of illocutionary claim about a projected world and our role in it was being advanced by this text.

More specifically, this text provides a series of narrative warrants for belief and action that audience members can accept or reject. For instance, a reader can accept the belief that the Bible was meant for only one race, and consequently also accept the claim that they should not share it with other races through "missionary work." Such claims provide warrants for beliefs and actions in regard to that exact action, but also feed general dispositions toward other actions—for instance, this text and its claims, if accepted by the reader, can also strengthen other racist and anti-Semitic commitments that can culminate in violent action. By working the quotation from Jesus into his narrative, Gayman draws upon the storyline of the Bible and integrates it with the lived experience of the reader—the sympathetic auditor can now place his or her being (life) and actions in relation to this larger narrative, and use this to guide future actions and beliefs. Perhaps these specific calls to "respect" the correct lineage of the Bible have resonance with some white, rural individuals who are worried at where the uncertain world political and economic situation is taking them; the linking of the biblical narrative with concrete actions in their Lifeworld (i.e., segregating themselves from others, protecting the Bible from other races, etc.) often strikes a particularly resonant chord in these individuals.

Conclusion

While literature and argumentative texts may have some differences in some cases, one can more importantly claim that both enshrine claims about the world and how it could be—in other words, both types of texts share some sort of illocutionary power. One cannot claim, as Habermas does, that fictional texts are illocutionarily disempowered. This becomes obvious not only by looking at how all fictional narratives produce claims on the readers, but also through the troubling case of argumentative texts

that are deeply saturated with fictional, storied elements. The important aspect of all "fictional" texts is that they project possible worlds and ways of being in those worlds; this in turn places the reader in a position of accepting or rejecting such "second-order" references about the desirability of such a world and the acceptability of specific warrants for action and belief. The method through which this judgment proceeds is that of *identification*—the reader can identify with certain projected worlds and elements of the narrative, or they cannot. In the former, the reader accepts the world the text puts them in and in the latter case they see it as not applying to their life or their projects. Either way, the reader appropriates that text based upon this notion of identification. Even a rejection of the projected world of the text is based upon it *not* identifying with the reader's life or the acceptable parameters they hold for what an acceptable state of being would be. This study has attempted to show that the antecedents for such a response to Habermas's analysis of the literary text is available in the work of Ricoeur and Fisher. Through these scholars and their thoughts on narrative, one can begin to enunciate how fictional narratives can and do serve in an argumentative fashion (i.e., advance claims about the world and how it could be). While Habermas points out some interesting differences in the aim of many literary and argumentative texts, his analysis does not conclusively support a hard and fast distinction between these two genres; instead, one can argue that fictional texts do advance claims about the world, how it could be, and how we are to act. In other words, literary narratives can and do advance illocutionary claims on the reader.

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[1] For instance, see Paget Henry, "Myth, Language, and Habermasian Rationality: Another Africana Contribution," *Perspectives on Habermas* (Lewis E. Hahn, ed., Chicago, Illinois: Open Court, 2000).

[2] Jürgen Habermas, "Philosophy and Science as Literature?," *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays* (W. M. Hohengarten, Translator, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1996).

[3] Italo Calvino, *If on a winter's night a traveler* (trans. William Weaver, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981).

[4] Paul Ricoeur, "The Hermeneutical Function of Distantiation," *Hermeneutics & the Human Sciences* (John B. Thompson, ed. & trans, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[5] Walter R. Fisher, *Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1987).

[6] Jürgen Habermas, "Philosophy and Science as Literature?," 216.

[7] Ibid., 211.

[8] Ibid., 213.

[9] Ibid., 213.

[10] Ibid., 214.

[11] For more on Habermas's notions of validity claims and their redemption, see *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalization of Society* (vol. 1, Boston, MA: Beacon, 1984) and *The Theory of Communicative Action: Lifeworld and system: a critique of functionalist reason* (vol. 2, Boston, MA: Beacon, 1987). For those not familiar with this notion of validity claims, the following table lays each type of claim out and the corresponding world it refers to:

Typology of Communicative Speech Acts

(Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, p. 328)

	Basic Attitudes	*Validity Claims*	*World Relations*
Constatives	Objectivating	Truth	Objective World
Regulatives	Norm-conformative	Rightness	Social World
Expressives	Expressive	Truthfulness	Subjective World

[12] Jürgen Habermas, "Philosophy and Science as Literature?," 223.
[13] Ibid., 223.
[14] Ibid., 224.
[15] Paul Ricoeur, "The Hermeneutical Function of Distantiation," 140. It is beneficial to note that Ricoeur's discussion here applies to a variety of texts, not just literary/fictional narratives. For the purposes of this paper, the focus will only be on those texts that are fictional or non-scientific in nature.
[16] Ibid., 141.
[17] Ibid., 143, italics in original.
[18] Or appropriation would not occur, as the text's horizon would not overlap with the reader's horizon.
[19] John M. Allison, Jr., "Narrative and Time: A Phenomenological Reconsideration," Text and Performing Quarterly 14 (1994): 108-125.
[20] Walter R. Fisher, *Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1987).
[21] Ibid., 88.
[22] Ibid., 88.
[23] Ibid., 64.
[24] Ibid., 194.
[25] Narratives can also be used to justify or mystify past actions—for instance, religious narratives and myths often provide a sacred explanation for events and actions, including wars, disasters, global catastrophes (floods, sea level increases), etc.
[26] What is important in this text is the format, not the arguments over the historicity of Plato's depiction of Socrates et al. For instance, one can replace "Socrates" and "Crito" with "Bert" and "Ernie" and the dialogue could still provide grist for the next 2000 years of western philosophy. The format unfolds a projected world that has relevance to the reader's world independent of whether a "real" Socrates is speaking this solely for their benefit.
[27] Allison, "Narrative and Time: A Phenomenological Reconsideration," 112-113.
[28] Jayadeva's *Gītāgovinda*, trans. Barbara Stoler Miller, *Love Song of the Dark Lord* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1997).
[29] *Gītāgovinda*, 84-85.
[30] For more on this movement and Gayman's role therein, see Scott R. Stroud, "Religion and Hate: Fantasy Themes within Christian Identity Rhetoric," *Florida Communication Journal*, 30, 2002 and Scott R. Stroud, "Tales of Hate and *Différance*: A Narrative Analysis of Gayman's *The Book of Adam*," paper presented at the National Communication Association Conference, Seattle, Washington, 2000.
[31] Dan Gayman, *The Holy Bible: The Book of Adam's Race* (Church of Israel, Schell City, Missouri, 199-), 2. Emphasis and non-standard capitalization in original.
[32] For accounts of the many violent crimes and anti-government activities Christian Identity followers have been involved in, see "Ordained by Hate," a special investigation in *The Joplin Globe*, January 28, 2001.
[33] As for non-white readers of this pamphlet, one can see how it does posit a meaning for their life, but one which they will most likely reject (and reasonably so).
[34] D. H. Bennett, *The Party of Fear: The American Far Right from Nativism to the Militia Movement* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).